

LEGO Rock Raiders

Global Concept Summary

LEGO Rock Raiders will form the first batch of models to appear as part of the brand new LEGO Underground theme. As the theme name suggests the inspiration for LEGO Rock Raiders is an underground universe where giant machines labour in extreme conditions to mine for precious energy crystals.

LEGO Media and LEGO Play Materials have collaborated at every stage of the concept development and for the first time will deliver a synergistic package of products to the market place. This places the concept in a unique position within the LEGO Group as this is the first time in its history that there have been multiple products derived from a single concept.

Products will include LEGO Rock Raiders models, LEGO Rock Raiders PC CD-ROM game, LEGO Rock Raiders PSX game, LEGO Rock Raiders Puzzle Books and a LEGO Rock Raiders Comic Book.

The launch date of the new theme is September 1999.

The LEGO Rock Raiders Universe

Deep Space, sometime in the near future...

Spiral Galaxies, giant gas clouds and billions of stars fill the endless void. Meteorites pass by, spinning across space. The enormous geological survey ship, the LMS Explorer is making its' return journey home to LEGO World after a long expedition in deep space when it begins to encounter trouble. The vessel has entered into a giant asteroid field and the crew fight to manoeuvre their way safely through the perilous rocks, however the effect of the bombardment places the integrity of the shields at critical: they are running out of power. Low on power and listing badly, the LMS Explorer is consumed by a wormhole at the centre of the asteroid belt. Although badly damaged and running on emergency power the ship emerges from the wormhole intact.

The captain sets a course to orbit the nearest planet, hoping that the remaining emergency power will hold out long enough to make it there safely. Time is of the essence; the Rock Raider crew must make emergency repairs to the LMS Explorer and more importantly replenish the depleted stock of power crystals. A geological scan of the planet reveals seams of power crystals and LEGO ore, but can the sensors be trusted? The only way to find out will be to send the Rock Raider team down beneath the surface to locate and mine the precious minerals!

LEGO Rock Raiders PSX: the game objective

As a player your overall objective is to mine for the precious power crystals that you will need to re-energise the engines of the LMS Explorer. Power crystals are a recognised "commodity" within various LEGO Themes and children recognise and understand their value in relation to LEGO games. Within the LEGO Rock Raiders Theme we have introduced a second "commodity"; LEGO Ore. Ore is collected and refined by the Rock Raiders and used to create new buildings, vehicles and machinery.

Players will take direct control of the various vehicles offered within the game, (these remain consistent with the models available in the LEGO Rock Raiders toy range) selecting the most appropriate vehicle for a given mission objective. For example, you may require a fast and manoeuvrable vehicle like the Hoverboard or alternatively there will be times when the sturdy Loaderdozer will be required to crash through an obstacle!

Emphasis change from the PC version of LEGO Rock Raiders

LEGO Media International and Data Design Interactive have changed the emphasis of the product whilst maintaining the Rock Raiders Universe and overall game objective. The PC CD-ROM features a "god" style graphic user interface and adopts a standard menu structure for accessing the various features and functions within the game.

One of the significant differences between the PC CD-ROM and the console version of the game is the player interface: rather than controlling multiple game elements via a menu style interface, players of the PSX version will take direct control of a single vehicle, adopting a more action oriented style of game.

In addition to the fundamental change in the player interface, the console version of LEGO Rock Raiders will have unique mission maps and mission objectives.

The game engine

The game is set in a real time 3D polygon based environment. The 3D meshes that make up each of the levels can have a variety of undulations and the textures provide varying terrain types including lava, ice, water and rock, enhancing the game-play and adding a visual depth and richness. Each of the vehicles has specific physics code and will exhibit unique handling, providing a very enjoyable real time experience when controlling and manoeuvring them about the levels.

INSERT IMAGE OF GAME ENVIRONMENT]

This 3D polygonal based viewpoint has been selected over the 2D sprite based engine traditionally used in games of this genre. The Sony PlayStation platform will enable us to achieve strong visual effects and game play as it has been designed purely with real time 3D in mind and has excellent additional capabilities such as lighting and sound.

Lighting Effects.

Dynamic lighting can be incorporated to enhance the look of the game.

Fog and other transparent effects will be used to further enhance the look of the game.

Animating textures will allow us to show water / lava effects to greater effect.

Sound.

We will be using XM music to enhance the atmospheric feel of the game.

We will also use XA audio to further enhance the feel of the game.

If possible we could also incorporate Surround Sound into the XM music player if the libraries allow this to be done. (There was mention that this would be the case at the last DevCon.)

The real time 3D engine and the camera AI will automatically rotate the view and provide the best visual experience for the player and eliminate the need to falsely remove near-side walls that would otherwise block views. We feel that this freedom will allow us to create a more realistic playing environment without having to make compromises to graphics or game play.

Levels will be comprised of some of the following elements

Huge caverns littered with hazards for the unwary player. Stalactites hang precariously from the roof- ready to fall to the ground should a vibration caused by an explosion or heavy drilling vehicle occur.

Large Stalagmites stand proud in the solid cave floor blocking exits and hiding secrets behind and on top of them.

Tunnels linking caverns together, forming labyrinth-like mazes.

Looser rock and soil walls which can be excavated to travel from one cavern to another.

Natural obstructions such as lava flows, hazardous to anything that comes into contact with them. Cunning players will find ways to bridge seemingly impossible rivers of lava in order to reach bonus crystals!

Underground rivers. These will vary from being slightly stirring still-waters to raging torrents that only the most skillful of players will successfully overcome.

Underground lakes and pools.

Ice. The large drilling unit feels right at home on the ice with it's huge heavy-grip tyres.

Monsters and foe!

[DATA DESIGN TO EXPAND]

In addition to the hazards presented by the environment there are also a number of monsters and creatures inhabiting the underground!

The Rock Monster is perhaps the most feared of the underground creatures, huge and fierce he will easily destroy smaller vehicles and undefended buildings and will seriously hamper the efforts of even the largest of the Rock Raiders drilling machines!

The Lurker

The Scabby Scavenger

The Rock Whale

Game scenarios

The player will typically start in a smaller cave or cavern and will have an understanding of the particular mission objective. These will range in style and complexity and the player will build on knowledge gained in previous episodes.

Limited time will be a key motivator and will provide a significant element to the majority of the missions, adding tension and providing an arcade style feel to the gameplay. The time limiting factor can be implemented in a number of ways: forced screen scrolls caused by the movement of molten lava or rushing water where a player must escape destruction by staying ahead and reaching safe ground or by triggered events where a player must achieve specific goals before disaster such as reinforcing walls to prevent cave-ins or moving explosive equipment away from an earthquake zone before the next quake!

The current mission objectives will be established by using a combination of FMV scenes and a verbal briefing from the captain of the LMS Explorer. The briefing will be supported by a text description that can be recalled at any time during play.

Once the player has understood the objective they will be able to select an appropriate vehicle and driver for the job in hand! Certain missions may require the player to use a specific piece of equipment in order to aid the narrative flow of the game and add variety. For example a rescue mission involving the safe recovery of Rock Raiders from perilous positions around a level would almost certainly demand the use of the Tunnel Transporter rather than the Hoverboard!

[DATA DESIGN INSERT SPECIFIC MISSION EXAMPLE]

Two Player Mode

The PSX version of LEGO Rock Raiders will also include a co-operative two player mode where two players can each control a unit.

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